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# Special Milk Program for Children

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE / FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE / WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250  
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The Special Milk Program for Children helps schools and institutions provide milk to children at a low price or for free, in order to encourage children to drink more milk—a prime source of essential nutrients such as calcium, phosphorus, and riboflavin.

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## HOW DOES THE PROGRAM OPERATE?

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The program is administered at the Federal level by the Food and Nutrition Service of USDA, and in most States by the educational agency, which makes agreements with officials of public and nonprofit private schools, and residential and nonresidential institutions for children. Where States do not administer the program, Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices do.

Schools and institutions receive Federal reimbursement for a part of their costs of milk served to children, except for milk which is served as part of federally assisted meals under other child nutrition programs. The basic reimbursement rate for each half-pint of milk served under the program (except for free milk) is annually adjusted and announced by USDA. Where local officials elect to serve free milk to eligible children, they can receive reimbursement for the actual cost of each half-pint of milk they serve free.

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## WHAT SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS CAN PARTICIPATE?

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- Public and nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under.
- Camps.
- Licensed, nonprofit residential and nonresidential child care institutions, such as nursery schools, child care centers, settlement houses, and orphanages.

All the above are eligible to participate on request, regardless of whether they take part in other Federal child nutrition programs.

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## CAN ALL CHILDREN IN PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTIONS BENEFIT?

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Yes. These institutions must make milk available to all children who attend, without regard to race, color, or national origin. They agree to use the reimbursement to reduce the selling price of milk to all children. If they elect to provide free milk, they must not overtly identify, or in any manner discriminate against, children receiving free milk.

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## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR FREE MILK?**

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Where local officials elect to offer free milk under the program, any child from a family which meets the Secretary's income guidelines for free meals and milk is eligible. Schools and institutions are not required to make free milk available; however, if it is offered, any eligible child requesting free milk is entitled to receive it.

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## **WHAT TYPES OF MILK CAN THE PROGRAM OFFER?**

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Schools or institutions may choose from among pasteurized fluid types of unflavored or flavored whole milk, lowfat milk, skim milk, and cultured buttermilk which meet State and local standards for such milk. All milk must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration and consistent with State and local standards. Schools or institutions in Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands, and the Virgin Islands can use reconstituted or recombined milk when sufficient fluid milk is not available.

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## **HOW CAN A SCHOOL OR INSTITUTION PARTICIPATE?**

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They can participate by applying to the appropriate State or Federal office administering the Special Milk Program. For the name and address of this office, write to: School Programs Division, Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

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The Special Milk Program for Children of the U.S. Department of Agriculture is available to children regardless of race, color, or national origin.

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